

Project Pitch

An iOS app called **NewsNow** serves as an addicting news platform, delivering users with relevant news that aims to entertain. Ultimately, informing our audience of the news that matters and affects them. Our goal is simple: to make news fun! The primary **purpose** and **function** is to create a platform (in this case, a mobile app) that solves the growing threat of misinformation and the message fatigue that can come from reading the news by delivering timely news content that entertains. NewsNow will show users that staying informed can be entertaining.

The problem we are addressing is the growing public distrust in the media that breeds substantiated ignorance due to people resorting to avoiding the news altogether. From being presented with conflicting angles to networks with obvious biases that do not streamline the main point, there's no reason why the public wants to shy away from the news all together. We aim to create a *new* news platform with quick, 60-second hits that help users stay informed and reconsider their relationship with the news.

By utilizing the continuous learnings of the EMO program, NewsNow will come to fruition. We plan to use these initial skill sets and areas of Emerging Media expertise to develop this project:

Project Management Learnings due to the nature of this long-term project because there will be many areas to tackle and deliverables to execute, meaning each member of the team must utilize the learnings in JRMCM 7011 to contribute best to the team in a timely and communicative manner, just as we would if we were building this app for a client, specifically.

UX and UI Design through XCode. With the fundamental knowledge and learnings of SwiftUI, we plan to create the rudimentary UX and UI framework for NewsNow

Ultimately, NewsNow will offer to potential users a fun way to stay informed, while being entertained, which can likely influence the way users and future generations think about and consume the news.

Definition, Justification + Exploratory Research

Purpose: The purpose of NewsNow is to **deliver fun, factual news that excites.**

Overview: *NewsNow is a new kind of news that doesn't feel like news at all. By embracing unconventionality and doing away with old modes of news presentation, NewsNow challenges news*

that feels taxing by presenting viewers with stories that have dance, music, and content creators they love---because gone are the days where news, now is boring.

Problem: Traditional news presentation follows a rigid set up that leaves viewers feeling glum, depressed, or flat out bored. The normal structure of a broadcast show leaves little to no room for the true personality of reporters/content creators to shine through. As an effect, the viewers are left to feel a mounting cognitive load processing stories that feel taxing.

- Unsurprisingly, [cord-cutting is particularly popular among young audiences](#) as viewers between the ages of 18 and 34 are most accustomed to non-linear entertainment formats and (mobile) streaming alternatives. According to the American Society of Newspaper Editors only [21 percent](#) of reporters felt their newspapers were connecting very well with readers.
- Since 2010, the [pay TV penetration rate in the U.S.](#) has dropped from 88 to 74 percent, and according to the latest data, [over 46 million U.S. households will have cut their pay TV cord by 2024.](#)
- According to [the Atlantic](#), the typical American still watched about 5 hours of video a day in early 2012, and nearly 90% of it happened on Youtube, with live-TV-viewing down about 3 percent in the last four years to 4:38 hours a day.
- A [survey](#) from 2021 found that most U.S. adults cited the access of content they want to watch online as the most important reason not to subscribe to cable or satellite TV, at 71 percent of respondents.
- According to a survey conducted in 2020 among U.S. Americans and Canadians, nearly [half](#) of respondents stated that a key benefit of using virtual multichannel video programming distributors (vMVPDs) service as they provide access to live content

Solution: By incorporating music, dance, and text-to-speech functions viewers only have to dedicate 60 seconds to get the information they need without all the filler. NewsNow streamlines the process by cutting out the middleman of having to wait till a 5pm show to hear the stories that matter. By meeting a younger audience where they are at, and incorporating mediums they are familiar with, we will be able to capture a new fleet of news junkies who are news literate-- but in unconventional ways. News Now will be a platform that feels fresh, new and exciting. Every time a user enters the app they should feel an open media experience that is fun, inviting, and current.

Comprehensive Research Report: In order to understand the push to make content digital, we must first examine how and why this new generation consumes news...

I. Cord Cutting

(Cord-cutting refers to the cancellation of multichannel cable, satellite, and other [pay TV](#) subscription services by television viewers.)

- The [number of pay TV households in the U.S.](#) declined from a peak of 100.5 million in 2014 to 78.2 million in 2020. Some reasons are listed [below](#):
 - Too expensive
 - Not “live” (not compatible with people’s busy schedules)
 - Little to no choice for viewing selection
 - Programming is dictated by a set schedule (not flexible to accommodate people where they are at)
 - Saves money
 - Appeals to older demographic

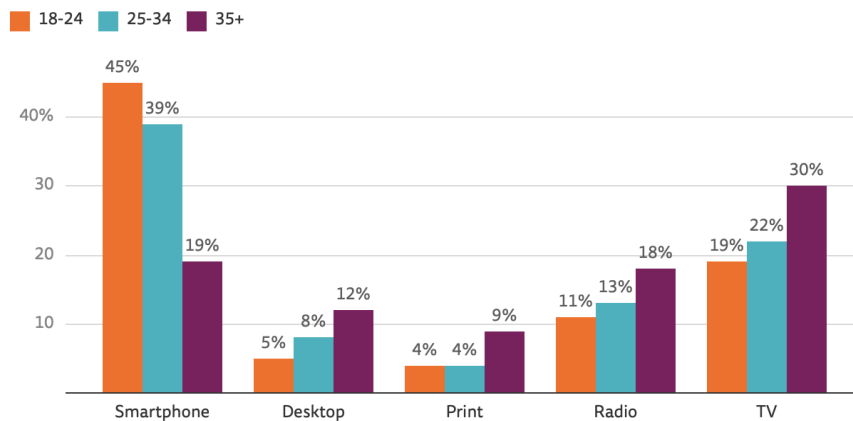
II. Understanding the Demographic

Generation Z (Gen Z) is defined as those born after the mid-1990s and aged 18–24.

- Young people are very reliant on mobile (Gen Z)
 - their media use is on-demand and algorithmically curated/personalised
 - The problem for publishers is that this means that individual news brands tend to play a small role in young people’s lives.
- Digital tracking in the US and UK shows that Gen Z and Gen Y spend a large part of their waking hours interacting with smartphones.
 - A smartphone is the main device used for accessing news for the vast majority of under 35s (69%).

FIRST CONTACT WITH NEWS IN THE MORNING BY AGE

Selected countries



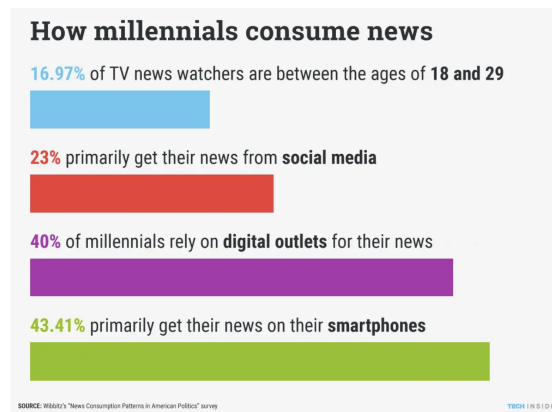
Q9c_new2016. What is the FIRST way you typically come across news in the morning?

Base: 18-24/25-34/35+: selected countries = 1863/3019/15247. Note: Data from US, UK, France, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Norway, Finland, Netherlands, Japan.

- While those over 35 are likely to first go directly to a news site via an app or the mobile browser (39%), Gen Z are more likely to turn to social media and messaging apps (57%)
 - In other words, news brands are less important for this group than for over 35s. Gen Y are somewhere in the middle, with 43% getting their news via social media and messaging apps and 33% directly.

III. Moments of Consumption

- Key moments of news consumption for young people
 - (i) dedicated moments where they give time to news (usually on evenings and weekends)
 - (ii) a moment of update (usually in the mornings),
 - (iii) time fillers (commuting or in a queue)
 - (iv) intercepted moments where they receive alerts from news organisations or messages from friends with news



IV. Identifying with new brands

- News brands play a very small role in young people's lives.
- Young people have a very low threshold for apps that don't provide a great experience, while they value services that are relevant and useful at all times.
- No news app was within the top 25 apps used by all the respondents in the study, whereas Instagram was the application found on almost all phones with the highest use in terms of daily minutes used.



V. Tone and Perception of the Media

- Young people were often frustrated by the negativity of the news agenda, about sensationalism and about perceived agenda of the mainstream media
- Hot/Trending Topics
 - Climate Change
 - Minority Rights
 - Race relations

- Gun Control

VI. Consumer Trends

- Strong interest in news formats that were more visual and easier to consume than an 800-word articles
- Some said the lack of context or background was often a problem too, so visual explainers – like those pioneered by Vox – tested well; as did other kinds of visual and mobile storytelling including graphical storytelling from publishers like the *Guardian* and the BBC.
- Podcasts were strikingly popular with young respondents, but the appeal of online news video was more mixed
- Younger groups are more likely to use online video than older generations
- Facebook is used slightly more by Gen Y (52%), while Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are used significantly more by Gen Z news users than millennials or by users over 35. (Note that facebook usage for news consumption for this demographic is on the decline as more youth have begun to look at the platform as “dated”.)
- Video is not *the* way to engage young people, rather it is one of many formats that *can* engage.
- **Major Takeaways**
 - The increased reliance on social media and other algorithmically driven services – which have been documented for several years – highlights that these generations (Y and Z) do not want to work hard for their news. This year’s qualitative study shows that they want news access to be *easy*, and *entertaining* – but they also want it to be *authentic*, *fair*, and *meaningful*. They certainly don’t want it to be dumbed down.

Sources:

[Digital News Report](#)

[Business Insider](#)

[The Guardian](#)

[CJR](#)

[Flamingo](#)

Guided Thinking: Unsurprisingly our own demographic gets their news the most on social media. *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *Instagram* are among the most popular platforms for stories. Here are some features of what makes them so appealing:

Unique Features of Social Media News
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On the demand / convenience (no need to wait for a show) - Less commitment than tuning in - Able to interact with other viewers through comments - Stories are short/concise (often limited by character limits) - Very visually driven - Typically designed with accessibility capabilities - Free - Routine (apart of their daily routine already to check their phone) - Alerts get sent to their phone - Concept isn't as dated - Appears more transparent than traditional media

Technology Driving the Product: We will be using **XCode** as our platform for developing NewsNow as an **iOS app**. The iOS app is the best method because it can function similarly to existing apps like TikTok that are already very well-known and accessible to our audience. XCode will be used because we are already familiar with it from Emuel's 4310 class and are able to include SF Symbols that would come in handy for users to navigate and create a more seamless UX. It is also developed by Apple, which makes it easier to develop an iOS app for the App Store.

Features:

Preference Selection enables users to hand select news topics they are interested in to tailor viewing experience.

Discover Page allows for deeper exploration of trending stories and breaking news through keyword searches.

Easy to Use Homepage which uses auto-scroll to glue users to their phone by cycling through the day's top breaking news stories after 60 seconds.

Source Verification ensures transparency to every content creator who posts to the app by initiating background checks and visibility listing out their qualifications to tell news.

Addicting Storytelling where NewsNow content creators will have full access to popular songs and subtitles to foster creative storytelling. Publishers have the freedom to be unconventional and express themselves (i.e. through dance).

Project Milestones:

Alpha

25% - Set up rudimentary framework of NewsNow and have a cohesive style guide and logo

50% - Have all SwiftUI Views set up with proper containers and content

75% - Add additional content necessary and link the SwiftUI Views

100% - Complete branding for NewsNow and go through the prototype thoroughly

Beta

25% - Review app and continue working on necessary elements

50% - Have functioning elements and all SwiftUI Views properly linked

75% - Create enough “user-generated” content (we will be getting creative with this portion, creating our own content and gathering volunteers to create content)

100% - Fix any issues that arises from user testing the product and polishing anything necessary

1.0

Have everything complete and ready for launch. Fix any issues that arises from user testing

Competitive Advantage Report (CAR)

Market Gap: Millennials and younger that want to stay informed without the commitment, nor task of trying to keep up during a normal broadcast newscast segment. Ideally, the goal is to appeal to the general public, but NewsNow directly targets individuals who are looking for a new (less taxing) way of receiving their news.

Market Justification: As the news landscape morphs into a more digital space, the distributors of the news need to too. Social networking sites have caught wind of this and have quickly

emerged on the scene as a prominent competitor for broadcast television (Often replacing viewers' preference for the latter all together-- because they understand their audience.) People want news that doesn't feel like news. They want news that is **not** taxing, boring, expensive, or impersonal.

Today, the data is clear-- the news needs to change.

[PewResearch](#) (Note: research was conducted in 2012)

- “The overall share of Americans saying they regularly watch local television news has slipped from 54% in 2006 to 48% “
- “The number of 18-to-29 year-olds regularly watching local news has fallen from 42% in 2006 to 28% today.”
- Nearly one-in-five Americans (17%) say they got news yesterday on a mobile device yesterday, with the vast majority of these people (78%) getting news on their cell phone. Among smartphone owners, nearly a third (31%) got news yesterday on a mobile device.
- Today, 19% of the public says they saw news or news headlines on social networking sites yesterday, up from 9% two years ago. And the percentage regularly getting news or news headlines on these sites has nearly tripled, from 7% to 20%.
- The two trends in online news consumption – growing numbers getting news via mobile devices and the increasing use of social networks – are complementary.

Rise of Social Networks for News among the Young and Not So Young

<i>Saw any news on social networking sites yesterday ...</i>	<i>General public</i>			<i>Social networking users</i>		
	2010 %	2012 %	Change	2010 %	2012 %	Change
Total	9	19	+10	19	36	+17
Men	8	17	+9	18	36	+18
Women	9	21	+12	20	35	+15
White	9	20	+11	20	35	+15
Black	6	17	+11	16	38	+22
Hispanic	--	18	--	--	34	--
18-24	12	34	+22	14	41	+27
25-29	13	32	+19	17	43	+26
30-39	19	30	+11	30	43	+13
40-49	8	23	+15	18	36	+18
50-64	5	10	+5	18	25	+7
65+	1	2	+1	12	12	0
College grad+	15	25	+10	25	38	+13
Some college	12	26	+14	20	42	+22
High school or less	8	11	+3	14	26	+12
N	3006	3003		1264	1512	

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 News Consumption Survey, Q82. 2010 asked whether you "got news or news headlines" yesterday on social networking sites. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

News now has to meet people where they are at, and forge new standards of news presentation in order to capture and maintain this younger demographic. As the old ways of news presentation slowly phase out from being the norm, platforms such as twitter, facebook and NewsNow will emerge as dominant figures that understand that this new generation of consumers want news that is fun, fresh, and exciting.

Competitive Advantage: While there are various other social media platforms on the market that perform with similar functionality, NewsNow is unique because it would specialize in only presenting news rather than it being a minor afterthought like other apps. Users can open the app with a greater sense of purpose and transparency as they navigate to view stories because the app will have features dedicated to story verification.

Unlike other apps, all content creators from NewsNow will be verified storytellers that have undergone background checks. NewsNow will be the first news aggregate that completely

does away with the boring news semantics and embraces dance and music. NewsNow will operate on an endless stream of video that plays video on a continuous loop, so there's no need to mindlessly click through the app.

Consumer Research:

General Demographic Makeup - The table below depicts the average consumers we expect will use the app.

Target Market	Gender	Race	Age	Education	Income	Location	Wants/Needs
Gen Y(millennials) and Gen Z	-	-	Gen Y 25-34 Gen Z 18-24	Some college education would be typical but no education is required	-	NewsNow will ask the user to enable location tracking for breaking news	To be informed, and have fun while listening (actively/passively) To have access to free news To be able to comment/communicate with others To be able to check the sources of a content creator

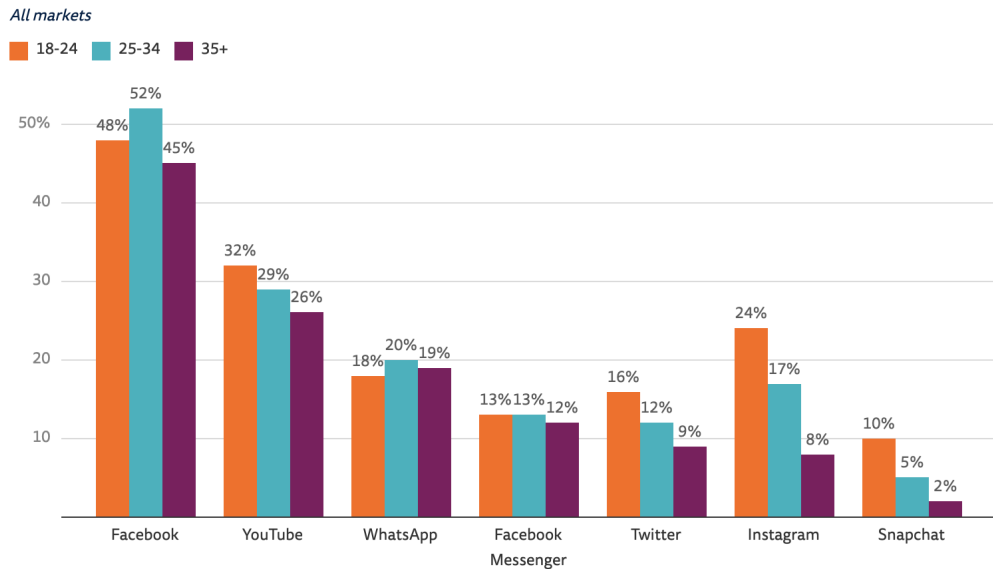
Trends/Patterns of these group include: Heavy reliance on smartphones and obtaining their news from social media

- Facebook is a popular news aggregator for both groups
- Facebook is used slightly more by Gen Y (52%), while Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are used significantly more by Gen Z news users than millennials or by users over 35.
- Twitter is twice as popular with Gen Z users compared to Gen Y users.
- Data suggest that most young people (and in particular those in Gen Z), spent a lot more time on Instagram this year compared to last. On the other hand, there was a decrease in time spent with Snapchat
- While many publishers think of Instagram as 'the platform' to reach younger groups, young people themselves often do not see it as the right environment for news:
- Young news users also rely on news aggregators like Apple News, Flipboard, and Uday, particularly when they use news in 'time filler' moments or want to get a quick

update about what is happening during intercepted moments → Among engaged young users they are used to curate the news they want and exploit the diversity of sources. For more passive news users, using an aggregator is an easy way to browse around a series of headlines.

- Young people were often frustrated by the negativity of the news agenda, about sensationalism and about the perceived agenda of the mainstream media.
- Sometimes they feel that the views and concerns of their generation – such as climate change and minority rights – are not properly represented.
- They do not want traditional media to go away, dumb down, or radically change their style just to appeal to them.
- Expressed strong interest in news formats that were more visual and easier to consume than an 800-word article. Some said the lack of context or background was often a problem too, so visual explainers are good


PROPORTION THAT USED EACH SOCIAL NETWORK FOR NEWS IN THE LAST WEEK



Q12B. Which, if any, of the following have you used for finding, reading, watching, sharing, or discussing news in the last week?
Base: 18-24/25-34/35+: All markets = 8272/13361/54116.

Source: [Digital News Report](#)

User Personas:



Motivations

Jodie is most motivated by fast-paced content that delivers what she needs, right when she needs it. As a proud member of Generation Z, Jodie's attention span is likely not very long, so she needs content that is short and sweet, with the information she needs.


Goals

To stay entertained on the platforms that she uses -- once she is bored, she is likely to leave!

Technology and Social Media Usage/Habits

Jodie spends a lot of time on social media, especially on TikTok, where hours just seem to pass without even realizing it. She is influenced by content she sees on her feed and actively participates in new TikTok trends.

Brands and influencers



NAME
Jodie

TYPE
Artisan


Demographic

Female 18 years

Atlanta, GA

Content Creator

LXPRESSIA
This persona was built in lupressia.com



Motivations

Micah is motivated by learning and wants to feel as though his time is being used well. He doesn't like wasting time on social media, but has found that TikTok has a lot to offer in the educational space.


Goals

To learn something new and useful on the app that he can apply to his life: such as new recipes, general tips and tricks about his hobbies and interests.

Technology and Social Media Usage/Habits

Micah tries to limit his time on social media, to make sure he stays plugged into the real world. Because of this, he needs content to be delivered fast with the benefits/learning opportunities clear from the beginning.

Brands and influencers



NAME
Micah

TYPE
Rational

Demographic

Male 27 years

Atlanta, GA

TikTok User

LXPRESSIA
This persona was built in lupressia.com

Sources:

[Nunzio, Mia Rose Del](#)

[Statistic Brain](#)

Product Comparison: As for the market saturation, there are many similar options already available to consumers.

Social Media apps:

- TikTok: Short video content (1BN Users)
- Instagram: Video content sharing with Instagram Reels
- Facebook: Video sharing with Facebook Watch

News apps:

- Apple News: Integrated into Apple Products, so many will already have this app by default without having to download anything
- Google News (210K Ratings)
- NewsBreak: Local Everything (660K Ratings)
- CNN: Breaking US & World News (1.3M Ratings)
 - while these are only readable news apps, rather than visually appealing/video-based content like NewsNow will offer, these apps are still highly used by the masses to consume news currently

TikTok is the most successful option.

- Incredibly popular: [over a billion monthly users](#)
- Young people especially dominant and active on the platform, estimated to [spend over 80 minutes a day](#) on the platform

Even though the UX/UI would be very similar, NewsNow would function solely for news stories, whereas TikTok's content types are limitless. What makes NewsNow unique is its use of **verified users** in order to fact-check and ensure a place where news can be shared *and* trusted. NewsNow will implement a verification requirement for journalists or reporters to post content, so that the content not only entertains, but also delivers truth. As mentioned, NewsNow will provide visual, video-based news content that eases the experience of users who would otherwise have to read through long articles on the existing news apps mentioned above

Competitor Research:

TikTok originally launched as a short-video sharing app for dancing/lip-syncing videos, it has now grown into a video service with content of all types. What is most similar to NewsNow from TikTok's platform is primarily the UI and general design/look of the app, since NewsNow plans to follow a similar format with short video news clips and features that adjust content based on user preference.

- Marketing Strategies:
 - Influencer Marketing
 - [Strategic and Disguised Ads](#): “TikTok harnesses the power to connect with your audience through authentic and raw short-form videos in a way that makes ads feel less like an ad and more like a gift to the audience.”
- Age: [5 years old](#)
 - Launch date: Sept 2016 (China), Sept 2017 (Internationally)
- Parent Company/Distributor: ByteDance
- [Revenue by year](#):
 - 2017: \$63million
 - 2018: \$150 million
 - 2019: \$350 million
 - 2020: \$1.9 billion
- Popularity:
 - [Annual Users](#):
 - 2017: 65 million
 - 2018: 133 million
 - 2019: 381 million
 - 2020: 700 million
 - Downloads by year
 - 2017: 130 million
 - 2018: 750 million
 - 2019: 1.5 billion
 - 2020: 2.6 billion
 - Age Demographics:
 - *Over 50% of all users are under 29 years old
 - Under 18: 28%
 - 19-29: 35%
 - 30-39: 18%
 - 39+: 19%
 - Distributed through any App Store

CNN News App (or Apple News Spotlight, which is automatically integrated into all Apple Products) “is your facts-first view into the stories that shape our time.”

“When you want to know what’s happening, tap into the global news gathering power of CNN. With correspondents and bureaus reporting from across the world, no other news source even comes close.” (["Mobile Apps"](#))

- Age: [10 years old, released April 18th, 2011](#)
- Producer/Distributor/etc, Target Market, Marketing Strategies
 - Distributed by both Android and Apple supported products
 - Producer: [CNN Interactive Group, Inc.](#)
- Popularity - Number of purchases, downloads, users, etc
 - [Estimated over 50million downloads to date](#)
- Current Reported Revenue, Product Price
 - Revenue: [<\\$5K August 2021](#), worldwide
 - Free app downloads - no purchase needed, only cost associated with the app is for live TV content and other curated CNN content that may require cable login credentials
- [Keywords/Search Terms](#)
 - watch
 - newsworld
 - stories
 - buzzfeed
- [Appearance, Design, Features](#)
 - Live television access (log-in credentials required)
 - Custom alerts to stay informed
 - CNN Original series, programs and films
 - Offered on every platform, including TVs, watches, speakers, etc
- Distribution Methods
 - As mentioned above, distributed on every platform, including iOS, Android, TVs, watches, speakers, etc
- [Review of Recent User Reviews:](#)
 - Out of 10 of the most recent reviews, 7 rated the app with 4 or more stars, making it seem like users tend to feel positively about the app. One anecdote from a user said: “I don’t have to read through the text to get through to the message.” when describing CNN’s app and respective articles
 - Overall 4.8/5 rating out of 1.3M Ratings

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